

Town Notes

News from La Plata Town Hall

December 2005 – January 2006

MAYOR'S CORNER



tree lighting ceremony and arrival of Santa will take place at 5:00 p.m.

The afternoon will also include an open house during which the citizens can visit and enjoy refreshments and the decorations at Town Hall. The festivities will conclude at 6:00 p.m. In case of inclement weather the activities will be held indoors. This will be a great opportunity to see your neighbors and share in the holiday spirit.

When the weather gets colder and winter is in the air it is time to anticipate the excitement of the holiday season. Please come and join us as the Town of La Plata hosts "An Olde Tyme Holiday Gathering" December 4, 2005. Children of all ages are invited to enjoy a puppet show beginning at 3:30 p.m., followed by musical entertainment. The Christmas

MEET THE TOWN STAFF Danielle Mandley



Danielle lived in Colorado until 1983, when she moved to Maryland. Danielle lives in Newburg with her three children Joy, Niki and Dillon, and says she loves spending time with her children - gardening, camping and fishing or just about anything outdoors.

Danielle has worked for the Town for a little more than a year now in Accounts Payable/Customer Service and says "I look forward to many more years of service to our wonderful residents."



Town Hall Closed

The Town Hall will be closed on the following days in observance of the holidays listed:

Christmas (observed) Monday, December 26

New Year's Day (Observed) Monday, January 2

Martin Luther King Day Monday, January 16

If you have a water or sewer emergency after hours, call 301-934-8421 and follow the instructions given to report your emergency. The automated response system will alert the appropriate department to respond to you.

Town of La Plata Officials

Mayor: Gene Ambrogio

Council:

Wayne Winkler.....Ward 1

C. Keith Back.....Ward 2

Paddy MuddWard 3

Vic E. Newman.....Ward 4

Town Manager: Douglas R. Miller

Assistant Town Manager:

Patricia L. Bembe

Town Clerk: Judith T. Frazier

Treasurer: Joseph W. Norris

Director of Community Development:

Michelle D. Miner

Project Manager: Steven F. Schroeder

Director of Planning and Zoning:

Catherine N. Flerlage

Director of Public Works:

Stephen A. Murphy

Police Chief: Cassin B. Gittings

305 Queen Anne Street, La Plata, Maryland 20646

Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.

Telephone: 301-934-8421 / 301-870-3377

La Plata Police Department: 301-934-1500

Email: dmiller@townoflaplata.org

Website: www.townoflaplata.org



Council Column

FROM WARD 1

Councilman Wayne Winkler

La Plata seems to be bursting at the seams. Outback Steakhouse is now open. By the time you read this, Applebee's will be open. We are getting a Mexican restaurant in the old Safeway shopping center and it should be open soon, and a True Value hardware store will open soon in the same shopping center. Fowler Earnshaw will start building houses on Willow Lane, and Martin's Crossing development will soon start working on phase II. Also, a new Charles County Government Services Building will be built in front of the old one; a new court structure is to be built on Washington Avenue, along with a new road, Talbot Street, which will go from Washington Avenue down to Route 301. There is also talk of upgrading Washington Avenue, whatever that means. We are holding the line on annexations but these developments are using infill land that is already in the incorporated Town limits. We are growing and I think most of it is positive.

Maryland Department of Planning and Maryland Department of Environment held two workshops at the College of Southern Maryland with Charles, St. Mary's, and Calvert Counties along with several of the municipalities, including La Plata, to look at common problems so that we can solve them as a team. We will be addressing water concerns, road infrastructure, as well as how much green space we should maintain. I recently went to a meeting, held by the County, to discuss their growth areas. They are Bryans Road, Bryantown, and Waldorf. The way they were talking we could see, in the future, 12- to 20-story apartment complexes in Waldorf. We could also see a 301 bypass around La Plata. More people and more traffic.

I will keep you informed as I find out what is going on. Have a great and safe Thanksgiving and Christmas. Wayne

FROM WARD 2

Councilman Keith Back

As the weather cools, the Town of La Plata heads into the winter and the Holiday season. I just want to take a minute and wish all of the residents of our town a safe and happy season. Since moving to this area, I have always loved the look of our town over the Christmas holidays. The decorations over the streets in the downtown and the lights in the neighborhoods always brighten the spirits of both young and old.

If you will be traveling for the holidays, please be extremely careful on the highways. A long drive with too many people on the road creates a bad situation, so please take extra care during this time of year. Also, please watch out for your neighbors and visitors once the weather becomes cold; clean your sidewalks of snow and ice to help prevent accidents.

We here in La Plata have a lot to be thankful for this year. Our town has really emerged from the dust and debris left after the tornado and has become a vital thriving area. So as your family gathers for any holiday celebrations, give thanks for what you have, but also take a few moments to think of those less fortunate than yourselves. Keep in mind those who have suffered this year due to the hurricanes on the Gulf Coast, those who have family members serving in the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, those who have lost loved ones this past year, and those who, for whatever reason, are going through hard times this holiday season.

I look forward to a wonderful holiday season here in La Plata and I wish you and your family all the best for the coming New Year.

FROM WARD 3

Councilwoman Paddy Mudd

Things are going along as planned in Ward 3. The Phoenix Run basketball court is completed

and in use most days and evenings. A clean up effort started by the Mayor with some volunteers will take place shortly and I'd like to get the neighborhood involved – especially the kids who use the basketball court! Trash cans will be placed there and the neighborhood officer will have some brooms available. Also, the road repairs in the back of Charleston Terrace have been completed, with a big thanks to Somerset Homes!

The St. Mary's Avenue streetscape is still in the planning stages – and with the leadership of Gore Bolton we are in the process of looking into undergrounding the lines. After hearing the stories of several towns in Louisiana, Florida and Mississippi, I am convinced this is much more a SAFETY issue than aesthetic one! Please bear with us until spring 2006 – we will include all property owners in the decision making process.

Come out to the Christmas Tree lighting/Open House at the Town Hall on December 4th!

FROM WARD 4

Councilman Vic E. Newman

The Town is hoping to work with the Tri-County Council to help institute a regional water management plan that will be accessible and enforceable by the tri-county area.

The Town will be meeting with the Charles County Commissioners on a quarterly basis to discuss growth within the county and the Town, to work together towards common goals. We will be looking at land management, water management and infrastructure (schools and roads as examples.)

The Parks and Recreation Commission is continuing plans to build a skateboard park at Wills Memorial Park and upgrading the Tilghman Lake park facility. The Commission will be reviewing ideas from a group of volunteers in Clarks Run Subdivision to discuss refurbishing Redwood Lake.

Best wishes for a safe and happy holiday.

DECEMBER 2005

La Plata Town Notes

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 Season's Greetings				1	2	3
4 Open House and Tree Lighting	5 Special trash pick-up day (Call by 4:00 p.m. Fri., 12/2 to schedule.)	6 4:00 p.m., Town Council work session 7:00 p.m., Planning Commission meeting	7 9:00 a.m., Design Review Board meeting 7:00 p.m., Crime Watch Council meeting	8	9	10 Breakfast with Santa
11	12	13 7:00 p.m., Town Council meeting	14 5:00 p.m., Parks and Recreation Commission meeting	15	16 Curbside leaf vacuum service ends	17
18	19 6:00 p.m., Christmas Decorations Contest	20 6:00 p.m., Town Council meeting	21 9:00 a.m., Design Review Board work session	22	23	24
25	26 CHRISTMAS (observed) TOWN HALL CLOSED (Monday's trash will be picked up on Tuesday, Dec. 27.)	27 6:00 p.m., Town Council work session Curbside Christmas tree pick-up begins	28 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Farmers' Market	29	30	31

JANUARY 2006

La Plata Town Notes

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 NEW YEAR'S (observed) TOWN HALL CLOSED (Monday's trash will be picked up on Tuesday, Jan. 3.)	3 4:00 p.m., Town Council meeting 7:00 p.m., Planning Commission meeting	4 9:00 a.m., Design Review Board meeting 7:00 p.m., Crime watch Council Meeting	5	6	7
8	9 4:00 p.m., Beautification Commission meeting (Rescheduled from January 16.) Special trash pickup day (Call by 4:00 p.m. Fri., 1/6 to schedule.)	10 7:00 p.m., Town Council meeting	11 5:00 p.m., Parks and Recreation Commission meeting	12	13 Curbside Christmas tree pick-up ends	14
15	16 MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY TOWN HALL CLOSED (No change to trash schedule.)	17 6:00 p.m., Town Council meeting	18 9:00 a.m., Design Review Board work session	19	20	21
22	23	24 6:00 p.m., Town Council meeting	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	 			



La Plata Business Association

United Way of Charles County is seeking candidates who live and/or work in Charles County to serve on its all-volunteer Board of Directors. If elected, Directors will serve a renewable three-year term beginning January 1, 2006. Directors are required to attend at least 75 percent of monthly Board meetings and serve on one or more standing committees, beginning with the Campaign Committee. They are also

expected to participate in and support the Organization's programs, fundraising and events. The time commitment involved is a minimum of three hours per month.

This is your opportunity to get involved with an organization dedicated since 1983 to making a positive impact in Charles County, and to work with others on addressing our community's most critical issues. For more information, or to receive an application packet, call 301-609-4844 or e-mail vburchuwcc@comcast.net



2005 Christmas Events



Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony

Sunday, December 4

Please join us in the annual lighting of the Town Christmas tree on Sunday, December 4, with activities prior to the 5:00 p.m. tree lighting. All activities will take place outside at the Town Hall. In the event of inclement weather the activities will be consolidated inside. Refreshments will be served.

3:30 p.m.

4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

4:15 p.m.

4:45 p.m.

5:00 p.m.

“Pigs at the Pole” puppet show by Blue Sky Puppet Theatre

Open House

Hand bell performance

Choir music – Lackey High School Chamber Choir

Santa's arrival, followed by the tree lighting

Breakfast with Santa

Saturday, December 10

Children 10 years old and under are invited to have Breakfast with Santa on Saturday, December 10, at the La Plata Town Hall, 305 Queen Anne Street. Donuts and juice will be served, and Santa will have a small gift for each child. Each child is asked to bring at least one Christmas card. Handmade cards are encouraged, and children may bring as many cards as they wish. The cards are taken to the residents of the nursing homes in La Plata.

Reservations are required and spaces are limited to 25 per time slot. Please choose one of the following time slots: 7:15 a.m. – 8:00 a.m., 8:15 a.m. – 9:00 a.m., 9:15 a.m. – 10:00 a.m., 10:15 a.m. – 11:00 a.m., and 11:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Call Town Hall by noon on Friday, December 11, so Santa's helpers will know when you'll be here.

Christmas Decorations Contest

Monday, December 19, 6:00 p.m.

The Town's Beautification Commission will again be the judges in our Annual Christmas Decorations Contest. All businesses will be considered, but individual homes must register to have their outdoor decorations judged in this contest. Call Gayle Curry at the Town Hall (301-934-8421 or 301-870-3377) by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, December 16 if you want your outdoor Christmas decorations to be judged. You may also register a neighbor's home that you believe should be in the contest. Please have your lights on by 6:00 p.m. in anticipation of the Beautification Commission judges.

Christmas Tree Disposal

The Town will pick up Christmas trees Tuesday, December 27, 2005, through Friday, January 13, 2006. Pickup will be on your regular trash day or the day after – just put your tree out with your trash cans on your regular trash day. The trees are taken to the County's composting facility at the County Landfill to be ground into mulch. They require that you do not leave the tree in a plastic bag if you use one to remove the tree from your home, and that you remove all lights, decorations and the tree stand.

Charles County has drop-off sites for Christmas trees, the closest ones being at the Courthouse parking lot and at the former location of the composting facility on Radio Station Road, across from the entrance to Laurel Springs Park. They will be open 24 hours a day starting Monday, December 26, through Saturday, January 14.

La Plata Town Services

Curbside Leaf Vacuum Service

The Town operates the leaf vacuum equipment from mid-October to mid December. **This service ends on December 16.** You must call Town Hall to be put on a list for pickup, which will be done as time permits. Leaves must be dry, have no branches, rocks, or wire or other metal debris mixed in, and must be raked to the curb.

Special Trash Pickup

Bulk items are picked up the first Monday of each month, or the following Monday if the first one is a holiday. Large amounts of loose material (such as brush) should be bundled or bagged in such a manner that the weight is less than 50 lbs. The Town reserves the right not to pick up items too heavy to safely handle. General construction cleanup and hazardous materials are not eligible. Items must be at curbside by 7:30 a.m. on pickup day. Call Town Hall before pickup day to be placed on the list. Minimum fee: \$10.00 for 5 minutes loading time; each additional minute is \$1.00. A fee of \$5.00, or the current Landfill disposal fee, shall be charged for each tire collected. *Billing for special trash pickup is included on your quarterly utility bill.*

Yard Waste Pickup

Containers of yard waste ONLY - leaves, grass and shrub clippings, brush or branches - may be put out on your regular trash day for pickup that day **or the next day**. The containers must be marked "Yard Waste." Brush or branches must be bundled, weigh no more than 50 lbs. per bundle, and the branches may not be larger than 4 inches in diameter or more than 4 feet long. *Plastic bags are not allowed - if you bag yard waste you must use paper bags.*

Household Hazardous Waste Collection

The Charles County Sanitary Landfill, located on Billingsley Road East between Piney Church Road and Route 5, accepts household hazardous waste products the first Saturday of each month during April through December, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The last collection day for this year is December 3. Items accepted free of charge include pesticides, herbicides, fertilizer, gasoline, motor

oil, antifreeze, paint, cleaning supplies, pool chemicals, batteries, expired prescription medicines and other poisons that are around your house. They advise that you should keep the materials in their original containers whenever possible, and bring the items to the collection site in cardboard boxes for ease in unloading. **If you need more information, please call the Charles County Dept. of Public Facilities at 301-932-3599 or 301-870-2778, or the Landfill information service at 301-932-5656.**

Snow Plowing on Town Streets

The Town has an emergency snow removal plan to clear Town streets. If it snows enough that Town snow plowing crews must be called out, please park only on one side of the street, if you must park on the street at all, and if your street isn't one on which parking is prohibited during snow emergencies. Clearing the streets of snow is made easier if you park in your driveway, and the Town asks that you only park on the side of the street as a last recourse. Your patience and cooperation with our snow plowing crews will be very much appreciated.

Trash Collection Schedule Adjustment

If your regular trash collection day is:
Christmas (observed) Monday, December 26

Trash will be picked up on:
Tuesday, December 27

If your regular trash collection day is:
New Year's Day (observed) Monday, January 2

Trash will be picked up on:
Tuesday, January 3



Posting Your Building Numbers

In addition to putting your address on your mailbox for mail delivery, please be sure that your house (or commercial building) number is posted on your building or property in such a position as to be plainly and easily read from the street. Emergency services and delivery services should be able to easily find your house number.

Section 78-5C. of the Town Code requires posting of the numbers: *All numbers shall be of metal or other durable material, shall not be less than three (3) inches high and in proportionate width, shall be of colors contrasting with the background on which they are placed, and shall be placed on the property or building in such a position as to be plainly and easily read from the street. Commercial properties located in shopping centers shall be numbered at all entrances from parking areas.*

Remember that the numbers must be visible from the street. You might want to view your house from the street and check on how easy or difficult they are to see from a vehicle. You may see that you need to move and/or replace your numbers. Check to see if trees or shrubs block visibility, or if you need larger than 3" high numbers, or numbers in a color which provides a better contrast with the background.

La Plata Citizen Profile

Don and Cheryl McGuire moved to La Plata 11 years ago when Don accepted the position of Director of Emergency Services for Charles County. They have three children and two grandchildren.

Don is responsible for Career Emergency Medical Services, 911 Communications Center, Animal Control, Homeland Security and the False Alarm Reduction Unit. Last year Don was deployed to Florida in the aftermath of Hurricane Charlie and this year Don spent over a month acting as Director of Operations for the State of Mississippi following Hurricane Katrina. Don was instrumental in helping the Town to receive grant money for construction of the new Police Station and for the installation of the warning devices that are now placed throughout the Town



Don and Cheryl McGuire

to warn citizens of impending weather danger.

Cheryl serves as the Secretary for the Charles County Historical Society, volunteers at the Tri County Animal Shelter and works on Damage Assessment for the County following storms such as Hurricane Isabel and the La Plata tornado. Cheryl served on the

Town Board of Appeals and currently holds the position of Chair of the Design Review Board with seven other dedicated members who work to ensure that the Town Development Design Guidelines are met.

Don and Cheryl both served on the Town Vision Team and hope to continue being a part of La Plata and helping where they can.

Please let the Mayor and Council know if you know someone in the Town's residential or business community who should be recognized for their outstanding achievement, volunteer service, community involvement or contribution to the community, no matter how great or small. Provide a brief description of the person and why they should be profiled in Town Notes. Send your information (and a digital image if you have one), to the Mayor and Council: e-mail to jfrazier@townoflaplata.org, or regular mail to Town Notes- La Plata Citizen Profile, P.O. Box 2268, La Plata, MD 20646-2268.

Town Notes is a publication of the Town of La Plata. If you would like to submit a Community Announcement item (subject to Town approval and space availability), please send it by email to jfrazier@townoflaplata.org, or send a typed copy to: Judy Frazier, La Plata Town Hall, P.O. Box 2268, La Plata, MD 20646-2268

Town of La Plata

305 Queen Anne Street
P. O. Box 2268
La Plata, Maryland 20646-2268

PRESORTED
FIRST CLASS MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
LA PLATA, MD
PERMIT NO. 131